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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 10 May 1993, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. DE ARAUJO CASTRO (Brazil)

- Concluding statements (continued)
- Statement by the Chairman
- Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS (continued)

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): As the 1993 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission comes to a close, I wish on behalf of the Chinese delegation to thank you, Sir, for your effective leadership and outstanding guidance and for your contribution to the work of the session.

I wish also to thank the Chairmen of the three Working Groups, Ambassadors Victor Batiouk of Ukraine, Wolfgang Hoffmann of Germany and Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun of Mongolia, for their efforts and their contribution. To Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada I express my admiration and thanks for her untiring work as Chairman of the Drafting Group of Working Group III.

I want at the same time to thank the Acting Director of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Prvoslav Davinic, for his strong support. I thank the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, and all his colleagues in the Office of Disarmament Affairs, along with the interpreters and translators, for their effective cooperation.

In the past three weeks the Disarmament Commission, in a serious, businesslike and cooperative atmosphere, has engaged in thorough, detailed deliberations on three important items: regional disarmament, nuclear disarmament and the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament. It has achieved some positive results. We are happy to note that the deliberations on a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security were completed on schedule with the achievement of a consensus final document.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

Our deliberations on the process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons resulted in the adoption of a general outline document; this lays the groundwork needed for completion of the deliberations next year.

In our view, we have also achieved broad consensus in our deliberations on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields. But regrettably, a final consensus could not be reached. This, however, will not shake the confidence of the international community in the Disarmament Commission, nor will it diminish the position or the role of the Commission. On the basis of the positive results achieved this year, we hope that at its session next year the Disarmament Commission will achieve a consensus document on this item, with a view to promoting international transfers of science and technology for the benefit of all mankind.

There have been important changes in the international situation since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. There have been positive developments in disarmament and arms limitation. Yet it is clear that the goal of general and complete disarmament as formulated in the Final Document of that session has not been reached. The international community must continue its efforts. In that respect, we believe that the Final Document and other General Assembly resolutions on nuclear and conventional disarmament remain valid and should continue to play a major guiding role.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

Peace and development are the two major themes in today's world. To face new challenges and opportunities, the international community needs secure, stable international relationships and a healthy, harmonious international environment. We call urgently for the establishment of a new international order on the basis of the United Nations Charter and the following five principles: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; non-aggression; non-interference in the affairs of other States; mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence. We believe that the Disarmament Commission can and should make an important contribution to that end.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

The Chinese delegation has always attached importance to and actively participated in the work of the Disarmament Commission and adopted a constructive and cooperative attitude. As always, we shall cooperate with other delegations and make concerted efforts in order to achieve new positive results at next year's session of the Disarmament Commission.

Mr. NEUHAUS (Australia): At last we come to the end of yet another long and intense session of the Disarmament Commission. As we lift our eyes from the depths of our drafting to the mountains of our inspiration, the common cause of disarmament and arms limitation, we can at least feel a sense of achievement.

In particular, we can feel a sense of achievement that, under the strong chairmanship of Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany, we have managed to come to a consensus on a document establishing guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security. My delegation feels this is of particular importance. The role of regional organizations has been given a special place in the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace". Australia in its own region is promoting the concept of a regional security dialogue. This paper will no doubt assist that process in our own and other regions. While we recognize that this is a product of compromise and not the world's most elegant document, we do appreciate that by and large it takes a forward-looking approach and provides some useful practical measures for regional disarmament, such as those set out in the annex to the document.

One regret we still have is that it was not possible to reach consensus on a reference to the need for universal adherence to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. This remains an important objective for my

(Mr. Neuhaus, Australia)

delegation. We are confident that in time the Non-Proliferation Treaty, whose central importance is incontrovertible, will gain universal adherence, and we will continue to work strenuously to that goal.

It is with disappointment that we note that it was not possible to reach final consensus agreement on a document on science and technology despite the efforts of delegations and the inspiring leadership of the Chairman, Ambassador Erdenechuluun of Mongolia. We should like to thank in particular Ambassador Mason of Canada for the magnificent task she did in this area. Her Drafting Group produced much useful language. This remains as a tribute to the progress achieved. Even though it has not been possible to agree on a document because of some outstanding important issues, we nevertheless believe the effort has been worth while and look forward to the resolution of the outstanding issues as soon as possible.

On nuclear disarmament, we believe that we have made much progress in establishing a useful and workable structure on which to complete this matter next year. Our thanks go to Ambassador Batiouk of Ukraine and other members of the Group for the spirit in which they engaged in advancing this topic despite the limited time available.

I should like now to make some general comments on the experience of this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. Above all, it has shown that in practice we can only hope to conclude one item a year. This underlines the importance of having a three-year rolling-programme approach. This is an approach long advocated by Australia and broadly accepted in the Disarmament Commission. We continue to urge its practical adoption.

In attempting to negotiate two consensus documents this year, we, as a small delegation, like many other small delegations, found our resources very stretched. Inevitably, there was a need for parallel meetings, almost

(Mr. Neuhaus, Australia)

throughout the whole Disarmament Commission session. This limits broad participation. It is a practice that should be avoided in the future, and it would be helpful if we had only to conclude one item each year.

To turn to more theoretical matters, it is still a disappointment to my delegation that there remains a commitment to language now long out of date and relevant to a different security era. We are concerned that the Disarmament Commission not simply be a forum for rehearsing extreme positions; ultimately delegations must work harder to move from those positions to actual recommendations which are expressed at a sufficient level of generality and abstraction to reflect the common disarmament goals of the international community. Those delegations which are among the most vocal advocates of the Disarmament Commission should be our allies in advocating a forward-looking approach to its work.

As a consequence both of the time-consuming negotiations involved in attempting to conclude two documents and of the intractable positions mentioned just now, our documents are too wordy and repetitious and the value of their recommendations obscured. We are also not impressed by the self-imposed masochism of lengthy, repetitive and extensive debates long into the night, which are tending too much to be the trademark of the Disarmament Commission. We need to rediscover a spirit which is both future-looking and flexible.

These are a few criticisms. However, it is with a positive spirit that my delegation wishes to conclude its statement. We have once again developed consensus language in many important areas and achieved a consensus document this year on regional disarmament. It has been said by an Australian politician that

(Mr. Neuhaus, Australia)

"Consensus is a word used by people who disagree with you to describe what happens if they force you to change your mind".

How true. Nevertheless, it has proved its value as a working method in the Disarmament Commission. Working together on the basis of consensus, we have advanced the programme not only of the Disarmament Commission but of global and regional disarmament in general. My delegation believes the effort has been worth while, and we would like to thank all other delegations for their efforts. Our thanks also go to the Secretariat for their sterling service.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would like to thank you for your wisdom and leadership, not only over the last few weeks but also in the period leading up to the Disarmament Commission session. Once again, the Disarmament Commission has been a tough but valuable exercise.

Mr. MAHMOOD (Pakistan): I should like at the outset to convey the deep appreciation of my delegation for the most skilful manner in which you have guided the deliberations of the 1993 session of the Disarmament Commission.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the three Working Groups, and the Chairman of the Drafting Group of Working Group III, for their invaluable contributions. In this regard, we would like to pay a special tribute to Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann of Germany for his chairmanship of Working Group II and for his untiring efforts which led to the adoption by consensus of the "Guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security".

(Mr. Mahmood, Pakistan)

Pakistan has for a number of years consistently advocated the importance and feasibility of the regional approach to disarmament. We therefore appreciate the adoption of the report of Working Group II on item 5, entitled "Regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security", which represents the universal acceptance of this important concept. The relevance of this approach is particularly pertinent in the region of South Asia.

(Mr. Mahmood, Pakistan)

While my delegation is generally pleased with the text of the report of Working Group II, in the chapter entitled "Guidelines and Recommendations" the language in some paragraphs, particularly those dealing with the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, could have been improved by making them more precise and removing some caveats. In this context, I should like to place on record that my delegation finally agreed to accept the paragraph on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the understanding that the formulation contained therein does not in any way detract from the various proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world, including the one in South Asia. The proposal for setting up a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, it may be recalled, has been overwhelmingly endorsed in successive sessions of the General Assembly since 1974.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom): I should like to begin by joining my voice to those of others who have congratulated you, Mr. Chairman, and the Chairmen of the three Working Groups, and who have thanked the Secretariat for its sterling work.

I wish to comment very briefly on each Working Group in turn and then, equally briefly, on the work of the Commission more generally.

I think we had useful exchanges on the nuclear item. Our aims this year were modest, and our achievements were modest too; but I look forward to taking part in the further consultations in the margins of the General Assembly in the fall.

My delegation was glad that we were able to complete our work on regional disarmament. Much credit for this goes, as others have said, to our Chairman, who kept our noses to the grindstone. I note that he did not resort to the tactics of his predecessor in Geneva and bribe us with sandwiches. Perhaps we

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

shall have to wait for the General Assembly for that. The guidelines on regional disarmament contain, in my delegation's view, some interesting material, and we believe the annex is particularly useful. Our only regret is that we did not have time to produce a short, concise document rather than a long, wordy one.

We were disappointed that, despite the efforts of the Drafting Group and particularly of its indefatigable Chairman, we ran out of time before we could complete our work on science and technology. However, we came very close, thanks to the flexibility shown by all delegations, and I hope we can complete our work on this next year.

I must confess, however, to some doubts about the wisdom of trying to complete work on two items next year. The difficulties we have faced this year have demonstrated the wisdom of the reform programme. We should not normally try to complete more than one item in any year.

I noted also, with great interest, our Rapporteur's suggestion that we should perhaps consider moving towards a two-item phased agenda. My understanding is that our present rules would certainly permit this. The idea of four agenda items is a maximum, and we can certainly have fewer.

The difficulties we have faced in ensuring that the texts we were trying to agree on contained real substance - difficulties which I think we faced in both the regional and science-and-technology Working Groups - demonstrated, in the view of my delegation, that there is no point in adding items to the agenda simply for the sake of it. Items should be on the agenda only if there is a general wish to reach agreeement on something positive and practical.

A conference has been defined as a body in which people who singly can do nothing get together to agree that nothing can be done. That does not reflect my delegation's attitude. Our experience this year has also strengthened my

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

delegation's belief that, particularly if the Conference on Disarmament is to be expanded, as we hope, the United Nations Disarmament Commission may not in future need to meet every year.

One final point: it has once more been suggested that we should not fight shy of voting. My delegation would be strongly opposed to voting. We believe it would call into question whether the Disarmament Commission serves any useful purpose at all. We would see little value in the guidelines and recommendations we produce if they did not reflect a consensus view, however painful it may be to achieve that consensus.

Mrs. CARVALHO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, I should like to place on record our deep appreciation for your efforts, Mr. Chairman, and for those of the Chairmen of the three Working Groups, as well as our gratitude to the tireless staff of the Secretariat for their great cooperation during this session.

I should also like to mention briefly certain points that are of great concern to my delegation. With regard to the work of the Working Group on regional disarmament, we consider that the priorities and principles set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which in 1978 was adopted by consensus - I repeat, by consensus - are still valid. We believe that at this very point in history, when we have freed ourselves from the cold war and conditions are conducive to achieving disarmament, it is more relevant than ever for us to refer to the Final Document of 1978.

In another regard, we find it worrisome that different yardsticks are used, according to the preferences of one or two delegations, in dealing with the issue of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. When

(Mrs. Carvalho, Mexico)

it is appropriate for the United Nations to take an important role, then that role is fundamental.

On the subject of the working methods of the Disarmament Commission, I believe that in our zeal we reach a point of diminishing returns. We are convinced that the night-time meetings of the Commission, without interpretation and with the presence of very few delegations, especially those of the developing countries, quite simply work to the detriment of participation by the developing countries. We hope that something will be done to address this situation.

We should have liked the results of the Working Group on science and technology to be given form in a working document of the Commission; this would have allowed us to give due consideration to the actual state of that Working Group's deliberations.

To end on a positive note, my delegation dearly hopes that participation next year in the deliberations and work of the Group on nuclear disarmament will be as enthusiastic as it has been this year.

Mr. CHANDRA (India): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for leading this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to a successful conclusion. It is successful because we have been able to develop a consensus paper on regional disarmament and, even though we could not achieve a similar consensus paper on science and technology, we have laid the basis for one in 1994. We are, naturally, disappointed that we could not achieve a paper on science and technology this year. We attach considerable importance to this issue as a means to curb the arms race, promote the access of developing countries to technology and redirect the use of science and technology for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind. We are confident that, given the improvement in the international climate and the hard work already put in by the delegations, the Chairman of the Drafting Group and the Brazilian delegation, it will be possible to have a truly meaningful set of guidelines and recommendations on this subject next year.

The agenda item on regional disarmament was a difficult one involving many differing approaches; this is well reflected in the countless brackets we had in last year's text. Thus, it is something of a tribute to all the participants that we could have a consensus text. One would be remiss here in not acknowledging the very special role played in this regard by Ambassador Hoffmann, Chairman of the Working Group on regional disarmament. In our view, this paper could not have been developed without his unflagging efforts, sense of fair play, grasp of the issues, forbearance and, above all, humour, which came to our rescue on several occasions.

Inevitably, as in any other multilaterally negotiated document, the paper probably leaves us all less than fully satisfied, as it entailed sacrifices by us all. Notwithstanding this inevitability, I think we have reason to be at

(Mr. Chandra, India)

least somewhat pleased with the paper, in which we can see at least the minimum responses to our respective requirements. My delegation is glad that the document recognizes that regional approaches to disarmament are complementary to global approaches and that such approaches are affected by extraregional factors. We are also happy that the paper underscores that States participating in regional arrangements should define the region and that such arrangements should come from within the region and should be agreed freely by them.

With regard to nuclear-weapon-free zones, our views on the so-called South Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone are well known. The text of the guidelines and recommendations on nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as that found in the section on principles and guidelines, adequately take care of our views and concerns.

We are, of course, disappointed that the paper could not identify the goals and priorities for disarmament as stipulated at the first special session on disarmament. We are even more disappointed at the failure of the paper to address the non-proliferation regime, due to the reluctance of some to agree that such regimes be multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory and universally applicable. I fear that until we can adopt this type of equitable approach, progress in disarmament is likely to be tardy and rocky.

Finally, I should like to thank Ambassador Batiouk for his leadership on agenda item 4, on nuclear disarmament. He has laid a sound basis for intensive work on this most critical item, to which our delegation attaches the highest importance for next year. I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to place on record our delegation's appreciation for the very hard work put in by the Secretariat, the interpreters and all those who work behind the scenes.

Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland): May I, at the outset, join my voice to those who have extended congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on the effective and efficient way in which you have conducted our proceedings, and also to the Chairmen of the Working Groups and the Drafting Group for the excellent way in which they have led us to the conclusion of our proceedings.

My delegation wishes to restate the considerable importance it attaches to the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as the specialized deliberative body on disarmament issues within the United Nations system. The fact that the Disarmament Commission, as a body with universal membership, makes it possible for all Member States to express their views and participate actively in the decison-making process gives special relevance to its proceedings and recommendations. This is particularly so at the present time, when, despite serious difficulties in some regions and areas, the relaxation of tension that has taken place in recent years gives rise to hope that positions formerly cast in stone may evolve in response towards a constructive and forward-looking consensus. At the same time, we believe there is a genuine possibility that the international community will seize the opportunity offered to it and take concrete steps towards the ultimate objective of complete disarmament in all fields.

We had hoped to conclude two items on our agenda this year. That we have not been able to conclude the question of science and technology in no way detracts from the efforts of those who participated in the Working Group; rather, it demonstrates the complexity of the issues raised. We hope and trust that further efforts over the next few months will lay the groundwork to enable us to conclude our work on this topic at our next session.

(Mr. Biggar, Ireland)

We were able to conclude our discussions on agenda item 5, "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security", and to adopt the guidelines and recommendations on the subject which are annexed to the report we adopted this morning. In general, my delegation is satisfied with this outcome, which contains much useful material and many interesting ideas.

May I at this stage also express my thanks and congratulations to Ambassador Hoffmann for the excellent way in which he led the work of the Working Group, using considerable energy and a sense of humour to lead us to a successful outcome.

(Mr. Biggar, Ireland)

Nevertheless, despite that successful outcome, I want to place on record my delegation's deep disappointment that it was not possible to include in the text an unequivocal statement that the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons contributes to regional and international peace and security or to express the wish that all States should undertake binding commitments in that regard. In the view of my delegation, that proposition is self-evident. We consider that the inclusion of such language would have provided a useful restatement of the international community's commitment to non-proliferation. We consider that this would have been a valuable and timely addition to the Commission's conclusions on this subject, and we therefore greatly regret its omission.

In accordance with the plan of work agreed upon, the question of nuclear disarmament is scheduled to be considered and concluded at our next session. My delegation welcomes the procedures decided on by the Working Group aimed at furthering this objective. We look forward to receiving at the General Assembly session the draft text of the Chairman's paper. We also look forward to participating actively in the informal consultations later this year. We believe that this procedure will be of considerable assistance to us in meeting our target of concluding our consideration of this subject at our next session.

Mr. RIVERO ROSARIO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Now that the Commission has adopted its report on its work, the Cuban delegation wishes to make some brief comments. First and foremost, we wish to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, to the Chairmen of the Working Groups on the three substantive items on our agenda, Ambassadors Batiouk of Ukraine, Hoffmann of Germany, Erdenechuluun of Mongolia, and to Ambassador Mason of Canada our highest

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

esteem and appreciation for your determination and tenacity throughout these weeks of very intensive work.

We wish also to express our appreciation to the entire Secretariat staff, including the interpreters, for their highly effective contribution to our work.

With respect to the work of the three Working Groups we wish even at this stage to place on record our readiness to cooperate in the consultations to be held between this and the next session, under the guidance of the Chairman of the Working Group on the very important issue of nuclear disarmament. The aim will be to make progress in every possible respect with a view to concluding, as expected, work on nuclear disarmament at next year's session. My delegation considers that that issue continues to be the issue to which the international community must devote priority attention.

With respect to the Working Group on a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security, my delegation considers that the document we have achieved contains numerous ideas and concepts that could serve as a foundation and guidelines for States in their efforts to further the work on a regional approach to disarmament. However, we feel that to be successful in promoting regional efforts we must make progress on the international level taking into account the priorities set at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, held in 1978. Notwithstanding the years that have passed and the changes that have taken place on the world scene, those priorities continue to be fully applicable and to provide the necessary underpinning for strengthening international peace and security.

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

My delegation is also of the opinion that an appropriate regional approach to disarmament requires consistent awareness of the fact that any guidelines and recommendations adopted must identify the special responsibility of the nuclear Powers and other militarily significant Powers with respect to abiding by any agreements that may be adopted on the regional level. They must refrain from any action that could directly or indirectly have an adverse impact on any specific agreement or on any other agreement in future.

Moreover, the relevant document ought also to have included a reference on the need to eliminate the military presence of States in regions outside their own, and the removal of all military bases such States may maintain beyond their own borders, in particular those in enclaves that exist against the will of the States in which they are to be found, since such a military presence has an adverse effect upon the countries in question and has a negative impact on their endeavours to promote regional disarmament efforts.

With respect to the Working Group on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields, my delegation is deeply dissatisfied that it was not possible in this, our third year of work on this item, to adopt a document on guidelines and recommendations on this subject, one which is indissolubly linked with disarmament and security throughout the world and which is moreover related directly to the economic and social development of countries, and particularly the developing countries. The Cuban delegation agrees with the view expressed by other delegations, that the work done at this year's session must be considered as providing the basis for further progress in the work on this sensitive and delicate issue.

(Mr. Rivero Rosario, Cuba)

We are aware, of course, that in the coming year the many sub-items under this subject must be dealt with with much dedication and a constructive approach, so that we can successfullly conclude our consideration of the item. We must always remember that we must reach agreements satisfactory to all in the framework of the United Nations and through collective multilateral discussion in our meetings. We must therefore take into account the interests of all countries, with discrimination against none.

On a procedural note, I would add that in this year's experience of trying to conclude work on two items simultaneously, where parallel Working Group meetings were held, a number of delegations were unfortunately prevented from adequately following the work of both Working Groups. We hope we will learn from this, and that in future we can organize our work in such a way as to prevent such problems from arising again.

Mr. PATOKALLIO (Finland): The past three weeks were spent in an effort to forge common conclusions on two topics to which the delegation of Finland attaches great impo tance: regional disarmament and the security role of science and technology, particularly transfers of high technology with military applications. Our conclusion is clear: the Commission could have done better; it should have done better.

My delegation is pleased that in the end a set of guidelines and recommendations on regional approaches to disarmament were agreed upon. We are grateful to Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany for his perseverance in shepherding the often difficult deliberations to a successful conclusion.

(Mr. Patokallio, Finland)

The validity of the regional approach has been affirmed through vigorous debate. The Commission's recommendations should now serve as a source of inspiration for efforts in the various regions of the world.

We welcome the clear recognition of the importance of verification in regional disarmament arrangements. It is also important to acknowledge the interrelationship between regional disarmament efforts and regional conflicts. Regional disarmament efforts and agreements are most urgently needed in regions of tension. In our view, such efforts and agreements should also include preventive measures. We regret that it was not possible to state this clearly.

Turning now to the subject of science and technology, I should like to begin by saying that Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada deserves our deepest gratitude. She did everything possible to coax a consensus out of the rather fractious gathering, and she very nearly succeeded. We would also like to single out the Brazilian delegation for the constructive and innovative role it played in the discussions.

But the one point - non-proliferation - on which consensus foundered in the end leads us to think that perhaps consensus was never in the cards. The outcome of the deliberations on this issue in the Working Group points towards the same conclusion.

Any forward-looking discussion of transfers of high technology with military applications must, in our view, take into account the existing situation, the existing non-proliferation Treaties and the existing arrangements supporting non-proliferation objectives. While no praise is necessarily required, acknowledgment of their reality is a sine qua non. The reality is therefore a reason, and it is very plain: proliferation of weapons

(Mr. Patokallio, Finland)

of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security. One does not really need the Security Council of the United Nations to state the obvious, but it does help. The reality will not go away, even if some - and there are not many - refuse to recognize it by name or otherwise. Nor will export controls crumble in the face of rebel attacks.

It would seem to my delegation that if wider multilateral dialogue on transfers of high technology with military applications is desired, the best way to go about it is not to denigrate or attack what already exists, but to build on it.

Finally, a procedural observation. In the course of our deliberations, it became evident that simultaneous meetings of two Working Groups complicated the work unduly and made it particularly difficult for the smaller delegations to contribute as much as they wished. From our perspective, this experience makes it all the more desirable to implement forthwith the three-item, phased approach, whereby the Commission would conclude only one item per session.

Mr. RYDBERG (Sweden): It is my pleasure at the outset to express my delegation's sincere thanks and appreciation for the skilful and dedicated way in which our work during this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission has been conducted by yourself, Sir, as Chairman of the Commission, as well as by the Chairmen of our Working Groups, Ambassadors Batiouk, Hoffmann and Erdenechuluun, respectively, and Drafting Group Chairman Ambassador Mason.

I will here abstain from commenting on the work of Working Group I, given that it was not supposed to finish its work this year.

(Mr. Rydberg, Sweden)

After all this work, the Commission succeeded in agreeing to a set of guidelines and recommendations on regional disarmament within the context of global security. As the Commission works on the basis of consensus, it is natural that texts adopted reflect the least common denominator. Sometimes there are also lacunae where no agreement is reached. Having said that, and with full appreciation of the important text which was agreed to, Sweden would like to state that it would have wanted to see a text adopted also on the positive effects on regional disarmament of universal adherence to regimes of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Even if non-proliferation is referred to in other parts of the text, it is a regrettable omission in the approved guidelines and recommendations.

My delegation regrets that final success eluded the Working Group on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields. Having said that, my delegation expresses its concurrence with the statement of Ambassador Mason as Chairman of the Drafting Group. Considerable progress was, indeed, made. On a number of controversial and crucial issues, mutual understanding was enhanced. The working paper of the Chairman of the Working Group, which could serve as a basis for future work, provides a good reflection of where such agreement was approached and where additional efforts are particularly needed. It is apparent from the paper that these issues include the importance of respect for and participation in international non-proliferation instruments, as well as the role in this respect of export control measures taken by suppliers. My delegation is looking forward to further work on this important agenda item, for which a good basis has been laid by this year's work.

(Mr. Rydberg, Sweden)

If the Disarmament Commission is to uphold also in the future its position within the disarmament machinery, it is important that its reform process proceed. We must continue to see how working methods and efficiency can be improved. We should give further thought to the implementation of the agreed three-year rolling programme, as well as the problems caused by the proliferation of parallel meetings.

The Disarmament Commission is a universal forum for deliberation on disarmament matters, open to all States. It is, however, a matter of fact that a number of States do not actively participate in the negotiations. That could be interpreted as a lack of interest in the Commission's work or as a sign that the results of the work are not considered significant enough. The debate on the role of the Disarmament Commission must continue. The debate must be both open and open-minded. As the scene of international security and disarmament develops, so must the ways and means we develop to respond to that changing scene.

Mr. MORADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in the plenary of this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, we should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your well-deserved election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, and also on the masterful manner in which you guided our deliberations to a rather successful end. Our congratulations and sincere appreciation are also due to the Chairmen of the three Working Groups as well as to the Chairman of the Drafting Group of Working Group III. We should also like to thank the members of the Bureau for their efforts.

My delegation intends today to assess briefly the work of the three Working Groups.

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

With regard to Working Group I, on nuclear disarmament, it drew the outline of its work for next year. Given the difficult tasks the Disarmament Commission has ahead on this complex subject, we think further intersessional consultations are necessary to make the conclusion of this item a success next year. The successful conclusion of guidelines and principles on this item would, in our view, have a positive impact on the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty review and extension Conference.

Turning to Working Group II, dealing with regional approaches to disarmament, we are very happy that our collective efforts on this subject bore fruit and led to success. However, my country would consider guidelines and principles on this subject in the light of principles, guidelines and priorities envisaged in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We believe that the end of the cold war has diminished neither the validity of this important document nor its relevance.

Another important aspect which has not been addressed under general guidelines and principles on regional approaches to disarmament is the negative aspects of extraregional military presence on regional disarmament and arms limitation initiatives, in particular initiatives aimed at the establishment of zones free of weapons of mass destruction.

As to Working Group III, dealing with science and technology, it is true that it was not able to conclude its work this year, but we believe the results of our consultations in this Working Group were a success, in that areas of disagreement were identified and some progress was made towards narrowing the gaps. After all, this subject is a new and complex one, and we hope the Disarmament Commission will next year be able to conclude its deliberations on this item successfully. As my delegation has repeatedly

(Mr. Moradi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

emphasized in this Working Group, it is necessary to have a forward-looking approach on the transfer of science and technology with military applications, because existing regimes on the transfer of science and technology are not universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory, and do not, therefore, enjoy the recognition and support of the international community.

I should also like to make some comments on the Disarmament Commission in general. This year, the parallel meetings of three Working Groups made it difficult for small delegations to contribute adequately to their work. Also, on working papers, we believe it would be advisable for them to be distributed in advance next year in order to allow delegations sufficient time to reflect on their content. Finally, my delegation does not recognize a linkage between the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament and the existence of the Disarmament Commission. The Disarmament Commission stands on its own, and it is an important deliberative body in the United Nations system which allows all Members of the United Nations to address their concerns on disarmament and related security issues.

Mr. SHOUKRY (Egypt): Allow me at the outset to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our congratulations on the excellent manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We should also like to express our gratitude to the Chairmen of the Working Groups and the Chairman of the Drafting Group of Working Group III for their dedication and efforts aimed at the positive conclusion of our work during this session.

Although Working Group II was successful in completing its work after arduous deleiberations, it must be noted that the "Guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security" have been severely burdened by qualifications in various

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

fundamental parts of the text. This detracts from this document's value as a reference capable of promoting effective regional disarmament efforts, which could thereby consolidate global disarmament and international peace and security. Despite the wide ranging developments that have been witnessed recently in international relations and in the field of disarmament, developments that were widely welcomed in anticipation of their positive effect in advancing the common objective of disarmament, this year's deliberations, unfortunately, evidenced the continuing presence of a selective approach to regional disarmament that the delegation of Egypt finds unwarranted. This approach does not conform to the present climate of international relations and casts doubt on the level of commitment to the objective of general disarmament.

On this occasion we should like to reiterate our firm conviction that global and regional disarmament must be pursued earnestly and simultaneously, in view of their complementary nature. Though the characterisitcs of each region may, for practical reasons, call for the formulation of disarmament measures capable of meeting specific challenges in the field of disarmament in a particular region, this should not be construed as justification for selectivity in the application of disarmament measures in the regional context.

The elimination of the threat still posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, whether in the global or the regional contexts, necessitates continued efforts to address these threats earnestly and to accord this issue the highest priority in the field of disarmament, as has been agreed and recognized by all States Members of the United Nations. It is our conviction that this goal can be attained in practice by the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in all

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

regions of the world so as to create a world totally free of such devastating weapons. Tangible steps to implement existing initiatives in this field, particularly when there is general support by the States of a region for such an initiative, should be embarked upon immediately.

It is unfortunate that Working Group III was unable to conclude consideration of the item on science and technology, despite the importance of this issue and the efforts that were made by all delegations for this objective during the session. We sincerely hope that during the forthcoming session of the Disarmament Commission it will be possible to conclude this item successfully. Undoubtedly, the results of this year's session will contribute positively to this end, since there has been substantial progress in bridging the gaps between the positions of delegations in many areas. The efforts of the Chairman of the Drafting Group for this item, Ambassador Mason, are greatly appreciated.

Finally, we should like to convey our profound appreciation to all delegations participating in this year's session of the Disarmament Commission for the high level of compromise and accommodation that was displayed and that facilitated our work.

Mr. STELZER (Austria): I should like to join those delegations that paid a tribute to your leadership and impressive work, Sir, as Chairman of the 1993 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I should also like to commend the Chairmen of the three Working Groups - Ambassador Batiouk of Ukraine, Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany and Ambassador Erdenechuluun of Mongolia - for their outstanding contributions to the work of this session. Furthermore, my delegation would like to thank Ambassador Mason, who chaired and inspired the Drafting Group of Working Group III.

While the outcome of the hard work of the past three weeks has not equally satisfied the expectations of all delegations, my delegation believes that the 1993 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission has produced valuable results and has been at least partially successful. With the conclusion of yet another agenda item within the allocated time frame, the Disarmament Commission has again proved its capacity to fulfil its given mandate. The consensus document defining guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the global context is forward-looking and contains in its annex some very useful measures.

With regard to Working Group III on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields, the Commission has displayed the necessary flexibility by deferring the conclusion of the agenda item to next year's substantive session. The Austrian delegation believes that the lack of final consensus on the guidelines and recommendations elaborated by Working Group III reflects neither a lack of commitment on the part of the delegations participating nor a lack of quality in the deliberations. Difficulties encountered are mainly attributable to the complexity of the agenda item, which has never been dealt with before in comparable depth within a global multilateral forum. While

(Mr. Stelzer, Austria)

some delegations might have been overly optimistic at the outset of the envisaged final round of deliberations, we should now resist the tendency to overshadow with excessive pessimism the unquestionable progress made in this Working Group. Thus, the in-depth deliberations on science and technology did not only reiterate well-known national positions; instead, areas of possible future progress were defined.

Regarding the present incompleteness of the work on this agenda item, I should like to draw a parallel from the field of music. Quite a few incomplete works have been regarded as remarkable achievements without ever having had the chance - unlike the work of Working Group III - to be completed during the following year. To facilitate the outcome of next year's substantive session, I would like to support a proposal made today inviting you, Mr. Chairman, to conduct intersessional work.

Finally, I should like to commend the Secretariat for the excellent work it has done in facilitating these three weeks of hard work. It has truly helped us to achieve a positive outcome.

Mr. SHCHERBAK (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): First and foremost, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on the completion of the Disarmament Commission's work and to thank you for the skilful way in which you have guided our work, which has culminated with the adoption of the Commission's report and a consensus document on the matter of a regional approach to disarmament. My gratitude and thanks also go to the Chairmen of the three Working Groups. We wish, too, to extend our thanks to the members of the Secretariat and the interpreters for their careful work.

I should now like to refer to certain points regarding the results of our work. The Russian Federation attaches great significance to the work of the Disarmament Commission. In that regard, the drafting of a consensus document

(Mr. Shcherbak, Russian Federation)

on a regional approach to disarmament demonstrated the Commission's ability to achieve a compromise solution even where there exist extreme differences of opinions of member States on important questions. The positive work can also be seen in the document we have adopted, which can be considered an important component of the global and regional infrastructure of disarmament and security.

Also important is the fact that our document establishes a connection between the settlement of regional conflicts and the process of regional disarmament. However, the effectiveness of our recommendations and their practical results would be greater if, in the document on a regional approach to disarmament, there were a clear indication that a general observance of the nuclear non-proliferation régime is supported by the process of regional disarmament.

Unfortunately, my delegation is compelled to note that we were unable to achieve the progress expected in the work of Working Group III on the role of science and technology in the context of international security. We attach great importance to this issue and express the hope that the Disarmament Commission will be able to complete its consideration of the agenda item at next year's session. Our delegation feels that the recommendations made today by the representatives of Canada and Brazil regarding future methods of work towards a consensus document on this matter are realistic. The key to the success of the work on this document, we feel, lies in the expansion of the scope of consensus, moving away from academic planning and guiding the work in future towards the search for compromise solutions.

We have equally positive hopes for the conclusion next year of the work on the question of nuclear disarmament, which is a priority issue for us.

Mr. CHOI (Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to join others in highly commending the results of the 1993 deliberations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and to express its sincere respect and warm regards for the Chairmen of the three Working Groups and the Drafting Group, as well as for the representatives and officers of the Secretariat who have devoted, throughout the current session, their precious time and efforts.

My delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, together with many other delegations in the room, on the work of the Commission and particularly on its success in adopting the document on a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security. Echoing the sentiments quite appropriately expressed by some representatives earlier, my delegation sincerely hopes that this document will be able to contribute significantly to the development of a constructive security dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region and other regions of the world.

It is the wish of this delegation, on the other hand, that, on the basis of the considerable achievements obtained this year, we will be able to look forward to more fruitful and constructive results next year, particularly with regard to the issue of science and technology and, hopefully, on the issue of nuclear disarmament.

Committing itself to a great deal of reflection on how to improve our deliberations on the questions before the Commission, in the spirit of greater cooperation and understanding, my delegation would like you, Sir, to accept one last expression of thanks from the membership for your devoted efforts and outstanding leadership in the course of the work of the Commission.

Mr. BESANCENOT (France) (interpretation from French): Let me add my words of thanks to those already addressed to you, Mr. Chairman, for the manner in which you have guided our work. We already knew full well your commitment to the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and we assure you that your talents were displayed in full measure here. I want also to thank the Chairmen of the three Working Groups for their great efforts, which made it possible to view the outcome of the session as satisfactory.

Let me comment briefly on the results achieved in each Working Group.

On nuclear disarmament, it is our view that the document forming part of the report of the Commission is a sound basis for our work in 1994. For this we thank the Ambassador of Ukraine, who guided the work of the Group.

On regional disarmament, we wish wholeheartedly to thank Ambassador Hoffmann for his patience, good nature and effectiveness, which made it possible to achieve a very satisfactory result. Notwithstanding certain repetitions, which Ambassador Hoffmann himself has noted, we consider that the paper sets out a number of important and certainly useful principles.

We all know that science and technology is a very complex and delicate subject, particularly in the current circumstances. We wish therefore to pay a special tribute to Ambassador Peggy Mason for her unrelenting efforts, enthusiasm and dynamism. Without her efforts to achieve compromise, we would not have gone as far as we did at this session. Large portions of the document contained in our report already reflect agreement. In any event, it forms a sound basis for further work next year.

As Ambassador Mason herself has said, it was premature to hope for agreement at this session. We regret that, despite major efforts to arrive at formulations acceptable to all, some delegations felt themselves unable to go along with even an implicit reference to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation

(Mr. Besancenot, France)

of Nuclear Weapons, which the vast majority of delegations in the Commission consider to be the very heart of all our efforts in the field of non-proliferation. It must be clear to all that respect for existing global multilateral non-proliferation commitments is in the interest of all who seek increased transfer of technology. But there is no point in regrets. Let us hope that next year, with the passage of time, we will find common ground acceptable to all.

I wish to conclude my remarks, Sir, by thanking you again, Mr. Chairman, for all you have done. I also thank the Secretariat staff, including the translators, whose outstanding work enabled us all to accomplish what we have done.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: Allow me first of all to thank very sincerely all those who spoke this morning and this afternoon for the very kind and very generous words they addressed to me and the other members of the Bureau, as well as to the Chairmen of the Working Groups and the Drafting Group.

As we reach the end of the 1993 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, permit me to make some remarks on our proceedings, on the work we have accomplished and on the prospects for the future. I have listened with attention to the 21 concluding statements made here today. Taken together they present a thought-provoking collective picture of how the present and future role of the Commission - and in fact of the United Nations - in the field of disarmament is seen by different delegations.

For three weeks the Disarmament Commission has brought together, to debate extremely sensitive matters of obvious international interest, delegations from all the regions of the world, representing nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States, countries large and small, developed and

(The Chairman)

developing, suppliers and recipients of high technology, parties and non-parties to different international agreements and arrangements in the field of disarmament and arms limitation and in that of export control.

I believe that the proceedings and the very significant final results of this session of the Commission have served to confirm the value and vitality of the Commission. They have proved that the Commission is in fact able to function effectively as a multilateral body open to the participation of all States Members of the United Nations and designed to serve as a forum in which meaningful dialogue can actually be directed in a focused and productive manner on disarmament and disarmament-related matters of interest to the international community.

Even more important, the results of this session of the Disarmament Commission tend to confirm the idea that in this post-cold-war world the United Nations can in fact play a more active and more productive role in the field of disarmament and disarmament-related matters. As the world goes through a process of constant and at times unpredictable, painful and traumatic change, a much greater degree of dialogue, understanding and cooperation on these matters is clearly needed. The United Nations can and should respond decisively to this need.

The report we adopted today on the item entitled "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons" points the way to the manner in which we hope to be able to conclude our work on this difficult subject during next year's session of the Commission. The Commission is endebted to Ambassador Victor Batiouk of Ukraine for the preparatory work he has conducted

(The Chairman)

during this session of the Commission. We look forward to cooperating closely with him over the next year in what is clearly an exceedingly challenging task. I would note in this respect that he will hold informal consultations on this subject during the intersessional period, and will convene a meeting in October-November 1993.

We are all very much aware of the extreme political sensitivity of the issues and the interests involved in the consideration of this question, but I believe we are all also very much aware that we must try to seize the opportunities opened by the changing international situation to help create conditions for urgently needed substantive progress towards the goal of nuclear disarmament.

It is highly significant that as a result of the very intense deliberations held during this session the Commission was able to adopt by consensus the agreed text on the guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security, which we expect to see endorsed by the General Assembly at its forthcoming forty-eighth session. I am certain that I speak for all of us in expressing our gratitude to Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann of Germany for the extremely effective manner in which he was able to lead the deliberations on this item to a successful conclusion. That result would not have been possible had it not been for the spirit of cooperation displayed by all delegations.

(The Chairman)

Needless to say, these are guidelines and recommendations, and not a binding international legal instrument. But the very fact that they have been negotiated and agreed upon in the United Nations, with the active participation on an equal basis of governmental representatives from countries of all regions and subregions of the world, would seem to indicate that a significant step has been taken today by the international community - a step in the direction of effectively promoting the conclusion of specific arrangements or agreements in different regions of the world aimed at promoting the objectives of disarmament and arms limitation and of confidence- and security-building.

The need for the adoption of such measures in different areas of today's troubled world is becoming increasingly evident. The fact that we came very close to adopting by consensus an agreed text on guidelines and recommendations on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields is in my view a no less remarkable achievement of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I am confident that the final version of the Chairman's paper, which is annexed to the report, will effectively serve as a very sound basis for the successful conclusion of the consideration of this item during the 1994 substantive session of the Commission.

We are grateful to Ambassador Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun of Mongolia for the very able and constructive manner in which he guided the work on this item, and we all are grateful to Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada for the energy and resourcefuless she dedicated to the task of chairing the Drafting Group on what we hoped, up to the very last moment, would be an agreed text of guidelines and recommendations on this subject.

(The Chairman)

We were, perhaps, only a few hours away from final agreement on the subject of science and technology, but the fact that we did not conclude consideration of the item at this session would seem to reflect the need very understandably felt by at least some delegations to further reflect on the complexity and the implications of the issues involved, issues that had never before been dealt with in a systematic debate in a forum such as this. The decision we have taken, to give ourselves more time to conclude our work on the item on science and technology is, I believe, a very positive indication of the seriousness with which different countries are considering the need to engage in a greater degree of multilateral dialogue and cooperation on these matters for the benefit of all. In this connection, I would recall the suggestion made this morning that informal consultation on this subject be conducted later this year during the meetings of the First Committee of the General Assembly, as provided for in the 1990 document on "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission".

Together with the other members of the Bureau, I look forward to consulting with you later this year on the draft resolution, or resolutions, to be submitted to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, which would reflect the work accomplished this year and registered in our report and make recommendations for the work of the Commission in 1994. I also look forward to dealing with these matters at the organizational session of the Commission, to be held in November or December of this year.

Next year will certainly be a challenging year for the Disarmament Commission. In accordance with the decisions we have already taken, the Commission is expected to conclude, at its 1994 substantive session, the consideration of two items: the item on nuclear disarmament and the item on

(The Chairman)

science and technology. I am confident that with the cooperation of all it will be able to do so. At the organizational session later this year, we will also consider the proposals that have been, or may be, made concerning the inclusion in the agenda of one or more new substantive items. In doing so, we will bear in mind the agreed objective of moving the agenda of the Commission towards a three-item phased approach.

Before we conclude, I wish to express my sincere recognition to the members of the Bureau for the 1993 session: the Vice-Chairmen of the Commission, the representatives of Benin, Bulgaria, Canada, Ecuador, Ireland, Mauritius, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea; and our Rapporteur, Mr. Stefan Fule of the Czech Republic, who, together with the Chairmen of the Working Groups and of the Drafting Group, whom I have already had occasion to thank, contributed in a most cooperative manner to the achievement of the results of this session.

I am sure that all the members of the Commission will join me in acknowledging the very competent support that in preparing for and conducting this session we have received from the Office of Disarmament Affairs, which stands to play an ever more important role if the United Nations is to respond to the new opportunities and challenges in the field of disarmament. Our sincere thanks go to the Acting Director of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Prvoslav Davinic, and in particular to the Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, Mr. K.C. Lin, and to his colleagues who served as secretaries and assistants in the various working groups. Their advice and assistance were invariably helpful and most useful to our work.

A special word of thanks is also due to the interpreters, the Conference and Document Officers, and to all the other members of the United Nations

(The Chairman)

Secretariat who contributed to facilitating the work of the Commission.

Finally, it is with a deep sense of gratitude that I wish to thank all of you, representatives and dear colleagues, for your constant support and for the spirit of cooperation you displayed at all times during the work of the 1993 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. It has been a pleasure to work with you.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: I now declare the 1993 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.